

Ben Ladner's Performance Highlights, 2003-04

This was a historic, breakthrough year for AU as we set records of quality and achievement throughout the university. Some of these were:

- Admission of the most qualified freshman class ever (mean SAT's up 23 points from last year to roughly 1250; GPA average just under 3.5).
- *Princeton Review* included AU among 75 schools nationwide listed as "America's Best Value Colleges."
- *U.S. News & World Report* ranked AU 86 in its listing of the top schools in America (up 13 positions from last year, and up 35 from 10 years ago).
- The School of Public Affairs was ranked in the top 10, with Criminal Justice ranked #3 and Public Management #8.
- A British research institute ranked SPA's Political Science Department #32 in the world for its quality and world-wide impact on the field.
- The Kogod School of Business moved into the top 85 rankings, with the MBA program ranked 46th by the *Wall Street Journal*.
- The Washington College of Law was ranked in the top 50, with Clinical Law at #2 and International Law #6 in the nation.
- The College of Arts and Science's American History and Economics departments were ranked in the top 25 and Creative Writing among the top 50.
- The School of International Service, still the largest international school in the country, ranked in the top 10.
- The School of Communication became the third largest producer of journalists, visual media, and public communications professionals in the U.S.
- *Black Issues in Higher Education* has placed AU in the top 100 of graduate and professional productivity by minorities.
- In the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), AU scored *first* on three of the five dimensions in the survey, among the 42 universities with which AU is grouped ("doctoral extensive"). We were first in "level of academic challenge"; "providing enriching educational experiences"; and "student faculty interaction."

Additional specific highlights of my performance last year are listed below.

- 1) Oversight management of the American University of Sharjah (AUS), including extensive negotiations with the Ruler, management of the administrative team, serving on the Board and Executive Committee, security monitoring in light of Middle East tensions, etc.
- 2) Negotiated and completed renewal of \$10 million AU contract with Sharjah
- 3) Led AUS to achieve Middle States Certification, only seven years after its founding
- 4) Negotiated and completed a \$10 million contract with Nigeria to construct and provide oversight management of a new American University of Nigeria.

- 5) Attracted another \$15 million gift from Robert and Arlene Kogod
- 6) Launched \$200 million capital campaign with successful opening dinner ceremony and led effort yielding \$92 million through last year
- 7) Successfully lobbied U.S. Congress for \$10 million appropriation to the Army Corps to complete munitions and chemical removal from AU campus
- 8) Successful management of buried munitions and chemical warfare issues with the AU community, parents, neighbors, EPA, DC City Council, Washington and national media, and alumni
- 9) New ten-year institutional accreditation by the Middle States Association, with special notations for AU's success and Middle States' use of the AU Self-Study as a national model (ten years ago, Middle States gave AU only a provisional five-year accreditation)
- 10) New ten-year institutional athletic accreditation by the NCAA
- 11) New ten-year institutional accreditation by The United Methodist Church
- 12) Continued significant improvements to campus facilities, landscaping, and signage (including my own gift that created a new memorial garden in honor of my father-in-law)
- 13) Made high-profile decision to replace WAMU director, and successfully managed leadership transition, media relations, advisory councils, and listener responses. After \$3 million loss the previous year, the station operated with a balanced budget (even a slight surplus) and attained near-record contributions, including the largest corporate gift in WAMU history.
- 14) Extensive management of architectural, financial, donor, city, and other groups, leading to a successful groundbreaking event and the beginning of construction of the Katzen Arts Center
- 15) Extensive management of architectural, financial, donor, city, and other groups, leading to the construction and opening of the Greenberg Theatre
- 16) Implemented new campus governance system, including regular town meetings with the campus community, leading new University Council, delivering first "State of the University" address, etc.
- 17) Revamped and upgraded graduation standards and ceremonies
- 18) Led high-level Palestinian-Israeli dialogues in Washington, Jerusalem, and Ramallah
- 19) Numerous lectures, addresses, and presentations including, for example:
 - Commencement Address, American University of Sharjah—Sharjah, United Arab Emirates
 - Six-Country Conference (Canada, China, Korea, Japan, Mexico, U.S.) on North America and East Asia—Washington, DC
 - Embassy of Chile and American University Joint Conference: "Pablo Neruda Centennial Tribute"—Washington, DC
 - AU International Conference on Iraq and the Kurds—Washington, DC
 - American Jewish Committee Awards Ceremony—Washington, DC
 - International Conference on Contemporary Islam—Alexandria, Egypt
 - AU International Conference on Democracy and Elections—Washington, DC
 - U.S. State Department International Program for Near East and North Africa University Administrators—Washington, DC

- 20) Made more than one hundred presentations last year to groups of AU alumni, parents, students, faculty, plus university-wide commencements, convocations, memorial services, etc., and to groups of foreign visitors (university administrators, faculty, students, and government ministry personnel)
- 21) Hosted WAMU *World Crossroads* radio show
- 22) Led emergency evacuation and building repairs for Beeghley Building, due to chemical leaks
- 23) Led campus preparations and responses to Iraq war, Israeli-Palestinian tensions, and DC sniper episodes
- 24) Developed and received Board approval for AU's first University Wage Policy
- 25) Successful lobbying with the D.C. Mayor and City Council, leading to approval of bonds for construction of Katzen Arts Center
- 26) Made significant progress in implementing the 15-Point Plan, including campaign fundraising, governance reform, international program development, expanded physical fitness initiatives, reorganization of Campus Life division, increased operational efficiencies and cost containment, increased quality of students and faculty, reduction in number of master's and doctoral programs, and reduction in number of adjunct professors
- 27) Oversight management of IRS audit of the university (which was randomly selected)
- 28) Developed and implemented AU's first two-year budget
- 29) Served on Review Committee to develop the United Nations Report on Arab Countries
- 30) Elected to Board of Directors, National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)
- 31) Elected to Board of Directors, Committee for Economic Development
- 32) Elected Board Chair, Consortium of Washington Universities
- 33) Elected President's Council Chair, Patriot League

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